/211 cont./

262 Kumiss -- mare's milk fermented with spirits -- should be
272 acknowledged as the chief food of the Kirghiz /Kazak/. A special
[252] bag of smoked leather, called "tursuk," is used for the preparation
[415] and storing of kumiss. A wooden /212/ /illustration appears here/ stirrer is used to stir the kumiss while it is being prepared, and each time before it is used. The best kumiss is found among the Kirghiz /Kazak/ of the southern Altai and the Kokchetav uyezd, as they

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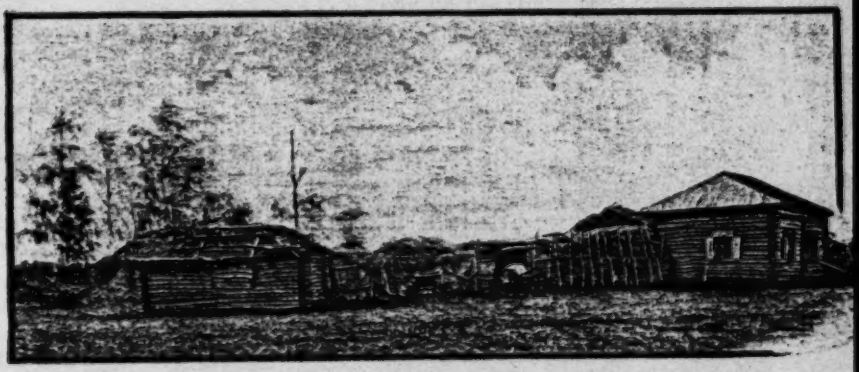

Winter quarters (kstau) of a well-to-do Kirghiz /Kazak/ in a wooded locality (yard, the buildings around it, and the house).

262 have the best pasture facilities for their livestock. In summer most
[272] of the Kirghiz /Kazak/ live primarily on kumiss, drinking great quantities of it. Other milk products consumed include "airan" -- sour cow's milk -- and various kinds of cheese, including "kurt," a roasted sheep's-milk cheese with small curds, "yeremchik," a sour cow's-milk cheese, and others. Meat is eaten primarily in winter, and most often mutton and lamb, because it is cheaper. Horsemeat appears only in
[252] exceptional cases, as a delicacy. Meat is almost always boiled (in
[264] the kazan) and only rarely roasted. First the meat is eaten (with the hands) and then the fat, "surpa," is drunk from large wooden cups. Smoked meat is also eaten. Wild game and fish are rarely eaten, and vegetables are likewise uncommon.

/212 cont./

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Omsk Kirghiz /Kazak/. A Kirghiz /Kazak/ woman milking a mare. (From a photograph by Bebenin.)

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252 Millet is the most widespread of the grain foods and is eaten either somewhat browned (and then eaten directly) or in the form of kasha. "Baursaki," an unleavened dough, is made with flour, cut into small pieces, and fried in sheep fat (it tastes like the Mardi-Gras nuts of the Russians). "Balamyk" is a watery dish made of flour, millet fried in fat and water, and cooked in the kazan. "Kaurdak" is pieces of roasted meat from various parts of an animal, of which the kidneys are considered especially tasty. As a sign of special attention and graciousness [574] to a guest, the host himself puts pieces of kaurdak into the guest's mouth (1). This is called eating "bish'-barman"

1. Apparently the Russian word "kavardak" /mishmash/ comes from this.

262 (five fingers). Kumiss, baursaki, and kaurdak make up the main food of the Kirghiz /Kazak/ and their favorite food, especially kumiss, which is at the same time considered just as sacred as bread is among the peasants. One can judge how much the 262 Kirghiz /Kazak/ love kumiss by the fact that there is retail 272 selling of kumiss, as of vodka among Russians (the so-called 275 443

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/212 cont./ "kumiss pubs" /kumysnye kabachki/). In Akmolinsk, Uralsk, and other steppe towns populated in part by Kirghiz /Kazak/, there are several such kumiss vending places, where it is possible to obtain a large cup (3-4 times the size of a teacup) of good kumiss for 2-3 kopeks.

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The nourishing and stimulating qualities of kumiss are well-known /213/ also to the local Russian population, not to speak of the patients visiting the healing places (Borovoye, Shchuch'e, Bayan-Aul, Ul'binskoye, and others) and summer houses, who drink kumiss on the advice of their doctors. The Russian popu-

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lation of the surrounding towns drink a great quantity of it in summer, for example, in Omsk, where in this season incoming Kirghiz /Kazak/ open a trade in kumiss (30-50 kopeks per chetvert). The Kirghiz /Kazak/ make an intoxicating beverage called "araka" from kumiss (by distillation), but it does not yet

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have a wide distribution. The Kirghiz /Kazak/ also like to drink tea with sugar, especially brick tea. They do not drink vodka and wine. Russian baked bread is customary among the

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Kirghiz /Kazak/ near towns.

It was said above that the main occupation of the Kirghiz /Kazak/, being a nomadic people, is livestock raising, but in recent times agriculture has also begun to spread. Here we shall only discuss the domestic occupations of the Kirghiz /Kazak/.

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A Kirghiz /Kazak/ nomad village near Omsk. (From a photograph by Bebenin.)

S 563 of stable construction. The common people build their winter tents with walls of interwoven twigs, sun-dried bricks and mud K 342 or soil filled with roots of grass. The winter quarters of the wealthy are of wood or stone. The common tent has but one room, shared by the family and their animals. The rich have K [556] numerous outbuildings, corrals for the different kinds of ani- [184] mals, storage places for the hay, and even stables.

The settled Kazakhs are those who have, for economic rea- K [361] sons, adopted the sedentary life of the farmer. Usually too poor to own animals or the equipment to move around, they stay in one place for harvesting and making hay. They live the year around in the same sturdy tent, adding an inner-lining of felt for protection from the winter winds.

b. Food

S 563 The diet of the people is the same as that of the New Uighurs. They are meat-eaters, though the very poor cannot afford to K 262 have it often. Their special festival dish is horse-meat sausage. [191] Their specialties for entertaining are fermented mare's milk, [292] horse-meat sausage and pilav. Brick tea is used in quantities. Their pilav differs from that of the New Uighurs in that they substitute dried apricots and dates for onion, garlic and carrots.

c. Clothing

S 563 Both men and women dress like the New Uighurs except for color. The men's inner garments are white, red or purple, and K 29 their cotton outer robes are black. Women usually dress in [191] white or black. Instead of a cotton sash, a man wears a leather [556] belt. A rich man's belt is ornamented with stones, coral, silver or gold. Accessories such as a knife and a leather pouch are hung on the belt. Instead of a hat, married women wear long turbans of cotton print. After she has been married for a couple of years, a woman's colorful turban is taken down by her mother-in-law and replaced by a white one. This act indicates that the K [885] young woman has earned a more important position in the family, and corresponds to the "coming of age" of New Uighur wives. Young Kazakh girls wear their hair braided like their New Uighur sisters.

3. Social values, customs and etiquette

S 563 Traditions and customs of the Kazakhs are almost the same K 769 as those practiced by the New Uighurs. Funerals and wedding 191 ceremonies are the same except that the Kazakhs celebrate the anniversary of a death with a big festival, like a birthday or a wedding, whereas the New Uighurs commemorate the occasion only with prayer. On this day the close friends, relatives and family members of a deceased Kazakh bring their own tents and food to the graveyard. The host provides food and drink. There are games and races, singing and dancing.

000 One custom peculiar to the Kazakhs involves stealing. The